

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A communication system for accessing and managing a
2 database, comprising:

- 3 a portable wireless communication appliance;
- 4 a remote device with access to the database; and
- 5 a cache device configured to communicate wirelessly with
- 6 the portable wireless communication appliance and to
- 7 communicate with the remote device, the cache device storing a
- 8 copy of a predetermined portion of the database.

1 2. The communication system of claim 1 wherein the
2 portable wireless communication appliance comprises one of a
3 radiotelephone, a personal digital assistant, or a portable
4 computer.

1 3. The communication system of claim 1 wherein the
2 remote device comprises a personal computer, a desktop
3 computer, or a server device connected to a network.

1 4. The communication system of claim 1 wherein the
2 cache device comprises:

- 3 a storage device for storing the copy of the portion of
- 4 the database;

a data processor operative to execute preprogrammed instructions and managing the copy of the portion of the database in the storage device; and

a wireless communication device operative to communicate with the portable wireless communication device.

5. A method of accessing and managing a database accessible by a remote device, the method comprising:

establishing a wireless communication link between a portable wireless communication appliance and a cache device storing a portion of the database;

sending a remote-device discovery inquiry by way of the wireless communication link;

determining if the remote device is available for communication with the cache device; and

accessing the copy of the portion of the database stored in the cache device when the remote device is not available.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising accessing the database when the remote device is available.

7. The method of claim 5 further comprising setting cache-device preferences when the remote device is available.

8. The method of claim 5 further comprising monitoring the availability of the remote device.

1 9. The further comprising of claim 8 further comprising
2 synchronizing the copy of the portion of the database with the
3 database according to the cache-device preferences prior to
4 the unavailability of the remote device.

1 10. A computer program product embodied on a tangible
2 storage medium, the program comprising executable instructions
3 that enable a system to:

4 establish a wireless communication link between a
5 portable wireless communication appliance and a cache device
6 storing a portion of a database;

7 send a remote-device discovery inquiry by way of the
8 wireless communication link;

9 determine if a remote device having access to the
10 database is available for communication with the cache device;
11 and

12 access the copy of the portion of the database stored in
13 the cache device when the remote device is not available.

1 11. The computer program product of claim 10 further
2 comprising executable instructions to access the database when
3 the remote device is available.

1 12. The computer program product of claim 10 further
2 comprising executable instructions to set cache-device
3 preferences when the remote device is available.

1 13. The computer program product of claim 12 further
2 comprising executable instructions to monitor the availability
3 of the remote device.

1 14. The computer program product of claim 13 further
2 comprising executable instructions to synchronize the copy of
3 the portion of the database with the database according to the
4 cache-device preferences prior to the unavailability of the
5 remote device.

1 15. A method comprising:
2 establishing a wireless communication link between a
3 portable wireless communication appliance and a cache device;
4 sending a remote-device discovery inquiry by way of the
5 wireless communication link;
6 determining if a remote device is available for
7 communication with the cache device;
8 setting cache-device preferences when the remote device
9 is available;
10 monitoring the availability of the remote device; and
11 synchronizing a copy of a portion of a database stored in
12 the cache device with the database stored in the remote device
13 according to the cache-device preferences prior to the
14 unavailability of the remote device.

